

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 HA-05 ACDA-12 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ARA-10 EA-10 /121 W

-----106984 211453Z /46

P R 211330Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 610

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USUN NEW YORK 586

CTU TWO THREE PT FOUR PT ONE

USCOMSOLANT

USS INCHON

USS SPRUANCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 448

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TP, PEPR, MOPS

SUBJ: SAO TOME PRESIDENT FEARS INVASION

1. ALTHOUGH INFORMATION FROM SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE IS SKETCHY, LOCAL RADIO AND TELEVISION HAVE CARRIED PRESIDENT DACOSTA'S MESSAGES EARLY WEEK FEB. 13 TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND OAU APPEALING FOR ASSISTANCE IN FACE OF IMPENDING ATTACK BY UNNAMED HOSTILE FORCES. DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL, F.H.P. KUIJPERS, IN TRANSIT THROUGH LIBREVILLE TOLD CHARGE FEBRUARY 18 THAT HE HAD BEEN IN LUANDA WHEN PRESIDENT DACOSTA ARRIVED TO SEEK MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM NATO, AND IN SAO TOME WHEN DACOSTA RETURNED. ACCORDING TO KUIJPERS, DACOSTA REPORTED THAT "BOATS WITH FLOOD LIGHTS" HAD BEEN SPOTTED OFF THE COAST OF SAO TOME, SEVERAL DAYS AGO AND STP AUTHORITIES FEARED THAT AN ATTACK WAS IMMINENT. HE THEN FIRED OFF HIS  
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MESSAGES TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE OAU AND FLEW TO LUANDA TO SEEK HELP. ACCORDING TO KUIJPERS THE ATMOSPHERE ON SAO TOME WAS NOT AT ALL ONE OF PANIC. HIS CAR WAS SOMETIMES STOPPED AT ROAD BLOCKS SET UP BY YOUTHFUL POPULAR MILITIA WHO WERE ARMED ONLY WITH STICKS BUT WITHOUT INCIDENT. HE REPORTED THAT ONE OR MORE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAD BEEN TAKEN TO THE BOA VISTA

HOTEL ON THE MOUNTAIN ABOUT 18 KILOMETERS ABOVE SAO TOME CITY FOR PROTECTION BUT THAT THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO OTHER SIGN OF CONCERN. CHARTER FLIGHTS FROM LIBREVILLE AND REGULARLY SCHEDULE FLIGHTS FROM LUANDA CONTINUE TO LAND AND TAKE OFF.

2. LIBREVILLE RADIO AND TELEVISION REPORTED FEBRUARY 18 THAT PRESIDENT BONGO HAD OFFERED FULL SUPPORT OF HIS ARMED FORCES TO ASSIST SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE WHICH, GIVEN THE STRAIN IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, MAY OR MAY NOT BE MEANINGFUL. BONGO PROBABLY FEELS CORRECTLY THAT IF MODERATE AFRICAN STATES DO NOT RALLY AROUND DA COSTA IN THE LATTER'S TIME OF SELF PERCEIVED THREAT THAT THE NET RESULT, THROUGH THE ANGOLA CONNECTION, WILL BE FURTHER ENTRENCHMENT OF CUBAN MILITARY INTO ONE MORE AFRICAN COUNTRY.

3. FORMER FRENCH LEGIONNAIRE WITH GOOD ACCESS TO GABONESE MILITARY SUBSEQUENTLY TOLD EMBASSY MEMBER THAT DACOSTA HAD TELEPHONED PRESIDENT BONGO STATING THAT STP DID NOT WANT TO RELY ON CUBANS FOR DEFENSE BUT THAT CUBANS WERE TRYING TO TAKE "CHARGE." IN RESPONSE TO DACOSTA'S REQUEST GABONESE PATROL BOATS, AIRBORNE TROOPS AND PRESIDENTIAL GUARD WERE PUT ON ALERT STATUS FEBRUARY 18 AND REMAINED ON ALERT AS OF FEBRUARY 20. DACOSTA ALSO REPORTEDLY APPEALED TO PRC CONFIDENTIAL

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FOR ASSISTANCE AND PRC CHARGE FROM SAO TOME ARRIVED LIBREVILLE FEB. 19.

4. GABONESE MILITARY WITH WHOM WE WERE IN CONSTANT COMMUNICATION DURING VISIT USS INCHON AND USS SPRUANCE JOKINGLY SPECULATED STP OFFICIALS HAD SEE THE LIGHTS OF THE US SHIPS ON MANEUVERS LAST WEEK AND THOUGH THEY WERE GOING TO BE INVADED. YATES

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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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